



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

July 12, 2006

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Karen VanDusen, SBOH Member

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED ADOPTION OF CHAPTER 246-500 WAC,
HANDLING OF HUMAN REMAINS**

Background and Summary

The Board has authority under RCW 43.20.050(2)(e) to adopt rules to prevent and control infectious diseases, including rules concerning the receipt and conveyance of human remains. The Board has adopted such rules in chapter 246-490 WAC, Vital Statistics. Changes to the Board's rules are needed to be consistent with changes made in law in 2005, to allow for normal handling of human remains for final disposition, and to allow for religious practices. The proposed rule would move the human remains provisions of chapter 246-490 WAC to a new chapter 246-500 WAC, specific for human remains handling. The Board received a briefing on this proposal at its June 2006 meeting.

Board staff gathered input from representatives of funeral directors, religious groups, consumer advocates, health officers, a medical examiner, the University of Washington's Anatomy Department, the Department of Licensing's Funeral & Cemetery Program, and the Department of Health to develop the rule proposal. A summary of those comments were included in the Board members' packets for the June meeting. Since the CR-102 for this rule proposal was filed on June 7, additional comments have been received from the director of the Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation; a funeral director; two coroners; an ambulance company operator; and a consumer advocacy group. The latter group provided oral testimony directly to the Board at the June Board meeting.

Ned Therien, SBOH policy analyst, will explain the comments received since the filing of the CR-102. Dennis McPhee, Department of Licensing, and Philip Freeman, DOH Center for Health Statistics, are also here today to be available to address questions about the rule proposal. Please refer to materials behind Tab 10 in your packets.

Recommended Board Action

Depending on testimony offered and the Board's own discussions, the Board may choose to amend if necessary or adopt the following motion:

Motion: The Board repeals sections 001, 040, 050, and 060 of chapter 246-490 WAC, Vital Statistics. The Board adopts new chapter 246-500 WAC, Handling of Human Remains, as published in WSR 06-12-113.